

THE "BETHEL" REGIMENT.

THE FIRST NORTH CAROLINA VOLUNTEERS.

BY MAJOR EDWARD J. HALE.

"First at Bethel; last at Appomattox!" is an epigram which embodies the spirit of all the serious acts of North Carolina.

She has not exhibited those boastful qualities which seem to characterize the peoples of new countries. She had passed her century before she discovered that it was the making, not the writing, of history which chiefly distinguished her, and recorded the fact in her recently adopted motto. It may be said of her as the Duke of York said of Richard's noble father:

"In peace, was never gentle lamb more mild;
In war, was never lion raged more fierce."

When we consider these peculiarities of our mother State, assimilating her more nearly than her sisters to old-world communities, with their repose and reserved strength, we will be prepared to understand the secret of the surprises which she gave to her neighbors. It will also explain why so few general officers were accorded to her at first, and so grudgingly, and how it came about, before the war had ended, that the North Carolina contingent in the Army of Northern Virginia were masters of the situation. Indeed, no thoughtful soldier of that army, observing the course of events in the last year or two of the war, could hesitate to believe that if it had lasted a year longer the leadership of the army, saving Lee himself, would have been supplied by North Carolinians—that is to say, by those who contributed the greater number of soldiers as well as the greater